

*The Advantage of the Kingdom of CHRIST,*

*In the speaking of the kingdoms of the World :*

Or,

**PROVIDENTIAL ALTERATIONS**

In their subserviencie to

**CHRIST'S EXALTATION,**

**OPENED,**

In a

**S E R M O N**

Preached to the PARLIAMENT, *Octob. 24. 1651.*

a Solemn day of Thanksgiving for the destruction of the *Scots Army at Worcester,*  
with sundry other Mercies ;

By *JOHN OWEN*, Minister of the GOSPEL.

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*Tuesday the 28 of Octob. 1651.*

Ordered by the Parliament,

**T**HAT the Thanks of this House be given to *M. Owen* Dean of *Christ-Church* in *Oxford*, for his great pains taken in his Sermon preached before the Parliament at *Margarets Westminster*, on Friday the 24 of October ( being a day set apart for Publike Thanksgiving ; ) And that he be desired to print his Sermon : And that he have the like priviledge in printing the same, as others in like case have usually had : And that the Lord General do give him the Thanks of this House, and desire him to print his Sermon accordingly.

*HEN. SCOBEL*, Cler. Parliament.

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To the Supreme Authority of the Nation, the Commons Assembled in PARLIAMENT.

Right Honourable,



*F* all the Times which the Holy One of Israel hath caused to pass over the Nations of the world, there hath not any (from the days of old) been so filled with eminent Discoveries of his presence, power, and providence, in disposing of all Affairs here below according to the counsel of his own Will, as the Season wherein he hath made you a Spectacle unto men and Angels, being the Instrument in his hand, to perform all his pleasure. Neither in this Season hath he upon any Opportunity so gloriously laid hold upon his own Strength and Goodness, to manifest the fixedness of his Eye on those, who are as the Apple of it, as in that mighty Deliverance, the high praises wherof, according to his good hand upon you, you lately rendered unto him.

The more Brave and desirable, is your Design against the Lord Christ is clothed withal, the more Power and Subtily it is supported with, the greater is the Brightness of his coming for its wasting and Desolation. With what Deceivableness of Unrighteousness, and Lyes in Hypocrisie, the late grand Attempt of those in Scotland, with their Adherents (which also was of the former, and is gone into Destruction) was carried on, is in some measure now made naked, to the loathing of its Abominations. In digging deep, to lay a foundation for blood and Revenge, in covering private and sordid ends with a pretence of things Pious and Glorious; in Limning a state of Religion upon a worldly Stock; in concealing distant Aims, and bloody Animosities, to compass one Common End, that a Theater might be provided to act several parts upon, in pleading a Necessity from an Oath of God, unto most desperate undertakings against God, and such like things as these, perhaps it gives not place to any which former Ages have been acquainted withal. Now to reject all the Claims of the Authors and Abettors thereof to any Commission from above, to divest them of all Pretences to Religion and Zeal thereof, to disappoint them in their expected Affortions, and to make all their Strength become as Tow that hath kindled the fire, hath been his work alone, who takes to himself his great Power, to carry on the Interest of his Kingdom against all Opposers. Under the shadow of this mercy, composed of as many Branches of wisdom, Power, Goodness, and Faithfulness, as any outward Dispensation hath brought forth since the name of Christian was known, do you now sit in Counsel, and the Residue of the Nation in Peace? What Obligations from the Lord? What Cords of Love are upon us? The Return and Improvement of all his dealings with us, which he requireth and expecteth of us, I have pointed you unto in the following Sermon. For the present, I shall only add, that as whatever there hath been, of Beauty, Glory, or Advantage unto the people of God, in the late Transactions, hath been eminently of unreserved Grace; so the dreadful Vengeance which the Lord hath executed against the men of his Enmity and warfare, hath been most righteously procured, by their cleaving cursed Designs of Revenge, Persecution, bondage in Soul and Body, Spoil and Rapin; with the most glorious pretences of Zeal, Covenant, Reformation, and such like things, which never came into their hearts. Therefore that the God of all our Mercies and Deliverances would for ever keep alive in your Hearts a faithful Acknowledgment of his Grace, and a Practical Detestation of those ways which are such a Provocation to the Eye of his Glory, shall be the constant Prayer of

From my  
Study Ch.  
Ch. Oxon.  
Nov. 7.

Your most humble Servant

in our dearest Lord,

JOHN OWEN.



**Ezek. 17. 24.** And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, and have exalted the low tree: I have dried up the great tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken it, and have done it.

Although all the works of Gods providence (which are great, and sought out of all that have pleasure in them) have such a stamp and impress of his own Image on them, his wisdom, goodness, power, love, that they declare their Author, and reveal from heaven his kindness and wrath towards the children of men; yet such are the prejudiced lusts, inordinacy of affections and interests of many, that it hath always been a long and difficult task to convince them of his presence in them, when it hath been most uncontrollably evident.

The Egyptians will wrestle with many a plague, by thinking the Magicians can do so; and the Philistims will try to the utmost whether it be his hand, or a chance that is hapned to them. Lord, (saith the Prophet) when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, Isa. 16. 11.

Yea often times (especially when judicial blindness is gone forth upon them) though they cannot but see his Arm stretched as of old, and made bare, they will not rest in his sovereign disposal of things, but rise up against the works of his revenge and holiness; like wild beasts that are pursued, when all ways of escape & turning are shut up, they flie in the face of him that follows them; they repent not of their evil deeds, but bite their tongues for anger, & blaspheme the God of heaven, Rev. 16.

Yea such is the power of decivable lusts, that many will admire at the blindness of others in former generations, who considered not the works of God, (as the Jews in the wilderness) when themselves are under actual contempt of no less glorious dispensations: like the Pharisees who bewailed the folly of their fathers in persecuting the Prophets, when themselves were endeavouring to kill the Son of God, Matt. 23. 29, 30.

To bring then upon the spirits of men, a conviction of the works of God, and his righteousness therein, so as to prevail with them to rest in his determination of things, is a task meet onely for him, who knows all their hearts within them, and can carry on the issues of his providence, until to a man they shall say, Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily he is a God who judgeth in the earth, Ps. 58. 11. & this is that which the Lord here undertakes to accomplish, And, saith he, all the trees, &c.

In the preaching and prophesying of **Ezechiel**, this one thing among others is eminent; that he was *Aniseta parabolarum*, a wonderful framer of Similitudes and Parables; a way of teaching attended with much evidence, cleerness and power.

In particular, he frequently compares the world to a field, or a forest; and the inhabitants of it, to the trees therein. An allusion exceedingly proper, considering the great variety & difference of condition both of the one & the other. The trees of the field, are some high, some low, some green, some dry, some strong, some weak, some lousy, some contemptible, some sinifull, some barren, some useful, some altogether useless; so that you have all sorts of persons, high & low, of what condition, relation, or interest soever, clearly represented by the trees of the field; and these are the trees in my Text.

This chap. unto v. 22, is taken up in a Riddle, a Parable, with the exposition of it. The time being come that God would destroy the outward visible Monarchy of the Jews, for their false worship, Tyranny, persecution, & oppression, he employs the King of Babylon in that work, who subdues the Nation, takes away two Kings one after another, and appoints Zedekiah a titular Governour under him; but the wrath of God being to come upon them to the uttermost, he also closes with Egypt, rebels against him by whose appointment alone he had any right to be a Ruler, v. 16. so way is made by his ruine, to put an end to the kingly reign of the house of David in Jerusalem, Jer. 29. 16.

The Lord had of old, erected a kingly government in the house of David; not for any eminency in the Government it self, or for the civil advantage of that people; for he had long before chosen and established another consisting of seventy Elders of the people, Num. 11. 24. to whom he added Prophets & Judges extraordinarily raised up in several generations, according to his promise, Deut. 18. 18. which when the people rejected, he said, they rejected him, or his institution, 1 Sam. 8. 7. but that it might be a Type of the spiritual dominion of their Messiah, and so was a part of their pedagogy and bondage, as were the residue of their Types every one of them; yea, the most glorious enjoyments whatsoever, which were granted them, which did yet represent something that was afterwards to be brought in, was part of that servile estate wherein God kept that people, that without us they should not be made perfect. But now this carnal people beholding the outward beauty, lustre, and glory of the Type, they began to rest in it, to the neglect of the spiritual kingdom



of Christ represented thereby. And thus did they with the rest of their Types, until the Lord destroyed all their outward pomp and glory, *Isa. 1. 11, 12. Jer. 7. 4, 14, 15.*

So in particular dealt he with their *Kingly government*, when once they began to account their *bandage their glory*, and to embrace the *shadow* in stead of the *substance*. And this did he, to recal them to a serious consideration of the tendencie of all *Typical Institutions*, and the designe he was carrying on concerning the Kingdom of Christ. Hence, v. 22 of this Chap. he calls them from their thoughtfulness about the destruc<sup>t</sup>ion, desolations, and contentions that were amongst them in reference to their Civil Rule, to the consideration of that designe which he was secretly and silently carrying on, under all these dispensations. *I will also take off the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing: in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.* As if the Lord should say, There is a great noise in the world about setting up and plucking down of *Kings*, in this their carnal rule; and many of you see nothing else, you look no farther: but I also have my work in hand; my designe is not bounded within these limits, and outward appearances: I am setting up a King that shall have another manner of dominion and rule then these worms of the earth: *He shall stand, as Micah 5. 4.* The setting up then of the Kingdom of Christ, *who is the highest branch of the high Cedar*, and planting it in the Church, the *Mountain of Israel*, with the prosperity thereof, and safety of him that shall dwell therein, is the subject of vers. 22. chap. 23.

This being that, to the consideration whereof God here calls his people in such a season, I shall name two Observations from this connexion of the words.

Obf. 1. *In the midst of all the tumults and embroilments of the Nations, that which the Lord takes peculiarly as his own designe, into his own management, is the carrying on of the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus.* You are about your work; (saith the Lord) I also am about mine: you have your *branches and Cedars*; I also have one to plant, that shall flourish.

Dan. 2. 44. *In the days of these kings, shall the God of heaven set up a Kingdom that shall never be destroyed, &c.* Were not those Kings and Kingdoms also of his setting up, that it is said, *in their days he shall set up one of his own*? Yea doubtless, *He changeth the times and the seasons; he setteth up kings, and removeth kings.* Dan. 2. 21. *He ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will,* Chap. 4. 25. There is not a persecuting Pharaoh, but he raises him up for his own purpose, *Exod. 9. 16*: But yet, in respect of the Kingdom of his Son, he speaks of them as if he had nothing to do with them, *In their days, I will do my own work, advance the Kingdom of the Lord Christ.*

There are great and mighty works in hand in this Nation: Tyrants are punished, the jaws of Oppressors are broken, bloody revengeful persecutors disappointed, &c, we hope, Governors set up that that may be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord, that may be as the light of the morning, &c. 2 Sam. 23. 3, 4. The hand of the Lord hath been wonderfully exalted in all these things: But yet should we rest in them, should they not be brought into an immediate subserviencie to the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus, the Lord will quickly distinguish between them and his own peculiar designe, and say, *In the days of these changes I will do so and so; speak of them as if he had nothing to do with them.* The carrying on of the interest of Christ, is his peculiar aim; he of his goodness make it ours also.

Obf. 2. *Among all the designs that are on foot in the world, there is none hath either stability, fixeness, or final success, but only the designe of God concerning the Kingdom of Christ.* Other branches may be set, but the Branch of the Lord only prospers. The likeliest appearances of other undertakings, are but as the glorious rising of the sun in the morning, quickly clouded. The interest of Christ is like Joseph, *Gen. 49. 23, 24.* oft-times the archers shoot at it, and grieve it; but in the close, the bowe thereof abides in strength: and therefore this is the issue of all these dispensations, *That the Kingdoms and Nations are at length to be possessed by the Lord Christ*: this sheaf standing up, and all others bowing thereunto. And unto the consideration of these things, in the midst of all the tumults in the world, doth God effectually recal his people, and withal tells them how he will carry it on, in the words of my Text, *And all the trees, &c.* In the words three things are to be observed.

1. *The work that God ascribes to himself: and that he sets down under a twofold similitude:*

1. *Of pulling down the high tree, and setting up the lowe tree.*
2. *Of drying up the green tree, and making the dry tree to flourish.*

And both these similitudes are coincident, serving onely in this redoubling, for the clearer illustration of that which they shadow out.



2. *There is the issue that God will carry this out unto; in respect of others. All the trees of the field shall know.*

3. *A particular assurance that the Lord gives for the accomplishment of all this, from the engagement of his Name. I the Lord, &c.*

For the first, the expression of the work of the Lord, it may be taken two ways: 1. *Strictly and properly.* 2. *Large, and by the way of analogie and proportion.*

In the first way, you may consider,

1. The tree that is to be cast down and withered; and that is the *high tree*, and the *green tree*. A tree that in their eyes had both beauty and vigour, high and green: This was the *Judaical Kingdom*, admired and delighted in by the Jews: this, says God, I will reject; as also he will many a tall *Eliab*, that even some *Samuels* may think to be his Anointed.

2. The tree that is to be exalted, and made to flourish; and that is the *lowe tree*, the dry tree, contemptible for growth; it is *lowe*, useles for fruit; it is *dry*. And this is the spiritual Kingdom of the *Messiah*, contemned, despised: This, says God, I will exalt, carry on, and make glorious. For though the interest of Christ and the Gospel may seem lowe and dry for a season, in comparison of the glory of other flourishing interests; yet, in the issue, it shall be exalted above them all.

2. As taken more *largely*, and by the way of *Analogie*; and so the *high* and the *green tree* are the things of the most glorious appearance in the world, persons and states that seem to be exceedingly fitted for the work that God hath to do, that are in the greatest probability to be eminently instrumental in his hand. But alas, says God, these I will pull down, and cause to wither. Perhaps you will think it strange, that a mighty Monarchy, a triumphing Prelacie, a thriving Conformity, should all be brought down: but so it shall be: *Every mountain shall be made a plain.*

2. The *lowe tree*, and the *dry tree*, are things, persons, Assemblies, outwardly weak and contemptible, such as wise men do verily believe that God will never use: they will not understand that such *Moses's* shall be deliverers; but cry, Who made them Judges and Rulers: But even these will God exalt, and cause to flourish: *Every valley shall be exalted.*

Two Observations flow from hence, which I shall insist upon.

1. *In the carrying on of the interest of Christ and the Gospel, God will work wonderful providential alterations.*

2. *The assings of Gods providence, in carrying on the interest of Christ, shall be exceedingly unsured to the Reasonings and Expectations of the most of the sons of men.*

Some trees must be pluck'd down, and some raised up; yea, high trees thrown down, and the lowe cauled to flourish.

2. There is the issue of Gods thus dealing in respect of others, *All the trees of the field, &c.* By the trees of the field are meant men of all sorts that are concerned in these transactions: and herein you may observe two things.

1. Something *intimated*; and that is, an unwillingness in men to own these dispensations of God. Hence the Lord undertakes himself to set on a conviction upon them, as a thing of great difficulty.

2. Something *expressed*; which is the conviction it self that shall in the issue fall upon them, notwithstanding all their reluctancie. Hence also are these two Observations.

1. *Men are exceeding unwilling to see and own the hand of God, in those works of his providence which answer no: their reasonings, interests, and expectations.*

2. *The Lord will not cease walking contrary to the carnal reasonings of men, in his mighty works for the carrying on the interest of the Lord Jesus, until his hand be seen, owned, and confessed.*

For what remains concerning the assurance of the accomplishment of all this, from the engagement of his Name, I shall onely adde,

That the power and faithfulness of God are engaged in the carrying on the things of the Kingdom of Christ, to the conviction of the most stubborn opposers.

I begin with the first.

*In the carrying on the interest of Christ and the Gospel, God will work wonderful providential alterations.*

*alterations : Alterations among the trees of the field, Nations, States, and Men on the earth.*

When the beginning of the Saints departure from under the dominion of Antichrist, was followed with wars, tumults, and destructions ; it was objected to *Luther*, that that doctrine could not be of God, which was attended with such desolations. He replied, according to the vigour of his spirit, *Ego nisi tumultus istos viderem, Christum in mundo esse non crederem* : Did he not see those tumults, he would not believe that Christ was come forth into the world.

The Lord tells you how he will bring on his Kingdom, *Hag. 2. 6, 7. I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, &c.* The desire of the nations, is to be brought in by the shaking of the nations. They are to be civilly moved, that they may be spiritually established. Neither are they onely to be shaken, but also to undergo great alterations in their shakings, *Heb. 12. 27. This word yet once more signifies the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made ; that those things that cannot be shaken may remain.* They must have a removal, as well as a shaking ; *Mera Sogin*, a change, a translation. Most Nations, in their Civil Constitution, lie out of order for the bringing in of the interest of Christ : they must be shaken up, and new disposed of, that all obstacles may be taken away. The day of the Gospel is not onely terrible in its discovering light, and as it is a trying furnace, *Mal. 3. 2.* but also in its devouring fury, as it is a consuming oven, *Chap. 4. 1.*

There are three principal seasons of the Lords eminent appearance to carry on the Kingdom of Christ and the Gospel, and all attended with dreadful providential alterations : and unto one of these Heads may all particular actings be reduced.

1. The first is, the promulgation of the Gospel among the Jews, by the Lord Christ himself and his Apostles. What this was attended withal, is graphically described, *Matth. 24. 6, 7. And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars : for nation shall rise against Nation, and kingdom against kingdom ; and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places. And the close of it you have, vers. 29. Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken.* The Judaical State, in all the height and glory of it, was utterly consumed ; so that all flesh, all the Jews, were in danger of utter destruction, *v. 22.* Their own Historian himself a Jew, affirming, that, from the foundation of the world, never was there such destruction and desolation brought upon any Nation. Which words of his, are a Comment on that prediction of our Saviour, *Matth. 24. 21.* And the reason of this eminent desolation, you have, *Isa. 9. 5, 6.*

2. The second is, in the further carrying on of the Gospel after the destruction of Jerusalem, thoroughout the world of the Gentiles, subject then in a great proportion to the Romane Empire. And what is the issue hereof ? The opening of the six Seals immediately follows thereon, *Rev. 6.* which (after manifold and various alterations) end in that dreadful dissolution of the Pagan Empire, which you have described, from *v. 14.* to the end.

3. The most signal is the coming of the Lord Christ, to recover his people from Antichristian idolatry and oppression ; which, of all others, is and shall be attended with the most astonishing alterations and desolations, pulling down of high trees, and exalting them that are lowe. Thence is that war, described *Rev. 17. 14.* and that mighty vengeance poured out by the Lord Christ on the Nations, their Kings and Captains, *Chap. 19. v. 11,* to the end ; which the holy Ghost describes by a collection of all the most dreadful expressions which are anywhere used to set out great devastations in the Old Testament.

And this is the Head whereunto the present actings of providence in this Nation are to be referred ; they all tend to the accomplishment of his main designe therein. He that thinks *pabylon* is confined to Rome, and its open Idolatry, knows nothing of *pabylon*, nor of the New Jerusalem : The depth of a subtil Mystery, doth not lie in grots visible Folly : It hath been insinuating it self into all the Nations for 1600 years, and to most of them is now become as the marrow in their bones : before it be wholly shaken out, these heavens must be dissolved, and the earth shaken ; their tall trees hewed down, and set a howling, *Rev. 18.* and the residue of them transplanted from one end of the earth to another.

This, I say, then is the work that the Lord hath now in hand ; And this is a day of thank-sulpes,

fulhest in reference to what he hath done for us in this Nation. I know no better way of praising God for any work, then the finding out of his designe therein, and closing with him in it. God hath gone with you (I hope) now to the end of your work; leave him not until he comes to the end of his. He hath compelled you to go with him one mile for your own good; go with him two, for his glory. The two Tribes and an half sate not down in their own possessions, until the whole work of the Lord was done. I speak not with respect to any engagements of war with Ferraign Nations; what have I to do with things that are above me? You will finde work enough for your zeal to the kingdom of Christ at home; and this is the work of thankfulness which you are called unto.

Now the Reasons of this are,

*Reas. 1.* Because amongst all men, where the Kingdom of Christ is to be set up, there is something or other possessed, that he alone must and will have; and therefore the Lord, giving Jesus Christ by his own inheritance, it must needs be attended with great alterations. I dare say, until of late (whatever now is) there was not any State or Nation in the World, where the name of Christ is known, but that there was an entrenchment upon that which is the pure portion and inheritance of the Lord Christ, and that detained with falsehood and force. Yea, such is the folly and blindness of most men, that they think their greatest interest lies, in holding that fast, which Christ will take from them, *Pharisee*-like, that thought it the great advantage of his kingdom, not to let the people go, when it proved the ruine of him and his Land. This I dare say will in the issue be the ruine of all, or most of the tall trees of Europe; they have grasped much of the power of Christ, and endeavour to impose on the consciences of his in the worship of God, or otherwise opprest them in what he hath purchased for them; and, by a dreadful mistake, they suppose their own interest lies therein, which makes them hold fast, until Christ hath shaken them all to pieces, and taken away even that also which was their own. The late King had learned a saying from his Predecessor, *No Bishop, no King*. Hence he supposes his main interest to lie in holding fast *Prelacy*; whatever he seems to part withal, that he will not let go, that's his main interest. And what is this *Prelacy*? a meer *Antichristian* encroachment upon the inheritance of Christ. Christ coming to take his own, shakes the other to pieces. Those who would have been our Oppressors in Scotland, but that God hath crushed the Cockatrice in the shell, and filled the pit with their dead bodies which they had digged for us, they also had prepared a *Procrustes bed*, a heavy yoke, a beast that had it grown to perfection, would have had horns and hoofs, and in maintaining this, they think their great interest to lie.

And in holding this fast, are they after all their Associations broken in pieces, and this is one cause.

*Reas. 2.* The works that God hath to do in such a season, require it; God hath three great works to do, in the day of his carrying on the interest of Christ and the Gospel.

1 He hath great revenges to take.

2 He hath great deliverances to work.

3 He hath great discoveries to make. I shall but touch on each.

1 He hath great revenges to take, and that on three sorts of Persons.

1 On oppressing *papilionians*; false worshippers and persecutors: Whilst the Bride is preparing for the Lord Christ, he goes forth with the Armies of Heaven following him to take vengeance on these his enemies, *Rev. 19. 11*. These are the *Aboloms*, the usurpers *Isa. 43. 14* of his throne, the *Hamans*, the forcers of his spouse, the chiefest adversaries of his *Jer. 25. 12* kingdom: He shall fill places with dead bodies of those, and upon this account, *clai. 51. 35* wound the heads over many Countries, *Psal. 110. 6*. The Axe is laid to the root of *Rev. 16. 19* many a tall Tree on this score, even in this Nation, where he is reckoning for blood, and imposition of yokes; and he hath found out men, inheriting this spirit from one generation to another.

2 Scoffing *Edomites*, there is a twofold quarell that God hath with that generation of men.

1 Their joycing at *Sions* distress, and desiring its increase, *Psal. 137. 6*.

2 Their endeavour to destroy the residue, when at any time streightned, *Obed. 14*. How many in the late tryal, joyced in the straights of *Sion*? That sate expecting our destruction, that they



they might have risen to stand in *crofs ways* to have cut off them that escaped; wherewith should they have reconciled themselves to their Master, but with the Heads of the servants of Christ? God hath vengeance in such a day as this for *Edom* also.

3 *Luke warm Laodiceans*, neutralists, that *drink wine in bowls*, and are no way moved at the suffering of *Joseph Gallio's*, that care for none of these things? there is not a generation in the World, with whom the Lord is more provoked, then with this *Merox* generation; when God is jealous for *Sion*, he is displeased with them that are at ease, *Zach. 1.14, 15*. Now considering how many persons of all these sorts are fixed in the Nation, and you will see that vengeance cannot be taken on them without great alterations.

2 He hath deliverances to work: It is the time of visiting the Prisoners of hope: the prey must be taken out of the *Jaws* of the terrible: every staff of the oppressor broken in peeces; yea, he delivers his Saints, not onely from all that they have suffered, but from all that was in the contrivance of their enemies to bring upon them, which is greater then they can execute; and this will cost something before the *Pharaohs* of the Nation, will let his people go.

3 He hath great Trials to make.

1 Of his own, that they may be purged.

2 Of Hypocrites, that they may be discovered.

1 The day of carrying on the interest of Christ, is a day of purifying and purging, *Dan. 12*. Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried. That is a day like a furnace, *Mal. 3*. That will consume dross and Tin. The remainder of the people must be brought through *Zach. 3. 3*. the fire, *Zach. 13. 9*. *Joshua's Garmes* are defiled by dwelling in *Babylon*, many of Christ's own have contracted rust and soyl, have got carnal interests and engagements that must be scowred from them.

2 Of the discovery of Hypocrites, It is emphatically said of the Saints, that they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes: All sorts of professors will follow him in some paths, *Revel. 14. 4*. in such as are consistent with their Power, Dominion, and Advantages, they are *John 6. 26*. even ready to run before him: but he hath some paths that are unpleasing to flesh and blood, paths that he gives no leaves in; here men that say they are Jews and are no, but lye, give quite out from him. Now upon all these several accounts, must that day of the Gospel, of necessity be attended with great providential alteration.

*Vse 1.* To discover where dwells that spirit which actuates all the great Alterations that have been in these nations. Such things have been brought to pass as have fill'd the World with amazement. A Monarchy of some hundred yeers continuance, always affecting, and at length wholly degenerated into Tyranny; destroyed, pulled down, swallowed up; a great and mighty Potentate that had caused Terror in the Land of the living, and laid his sword under his beard, brought to punishment for blood. Hypocrites and selfish men abundantly discovered. Wise men made fools, and the strong as water. A Nation (that of *Scotland*) engaging for and against the same cause, backward and forward, twice or thrice, always seeking where to finde their own gain and interest in it, at length totally broken, in opposition to that cause wherewith at first they closed; multitudes of Professors, one yeer praying, fasting, mightily rejoycing upon the least success, bearing it out as a signe of the presence of God; another yeer whilst the same work is carried on, cursing, Repining, slighting the marvelous appearance of God in answer unto prayers and most solemn appeals, being very angry at the deliverances of *Sion*; on the other side, all the mighty successes that God hath followed poor despised ones withal, being with them as with those in days of old, *Heb. 11. 13*. who through faith subdued Kingdoms, wrought Righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the Sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the Aliens. He l say that shall consider all this, may well enquire after that principle, which being regularly carried on, yet meeting with the corruption and lusts of men, should so wheel them about, and work so many mighty alterations. Now what is this, but the most effectual design of the Lord, to carry on the interest of Christ and the Gospel, whatever stands in the way. This bears down all before it, wraps up some in blood, some in hardnells, and is most eminently straight and holy in all these transactions. *Isa. 54. 2*. What shall one then answer the messengers of the Nation? That the Lord hath sounded *Sion*, and the poor of his people shall trust in it.

*Use 2.* To magnifie the goodnes of God, who unto us hath sweetned and seasoned all his dreadful dispensations, and all the alterations in those Nations, with this his gracious designe running through them all: this is that which puts all their beauty and luster on them, being outwardly dreadful and horrible. The carrying on of this (which is hidden from the men of the world; who have therefore no joy) is the only thing we have to rejoyce in this day; our Victories have no glory, but what they receive from hence: *Isa. 4. 2.* That blood which is an acceptable sacrifice to the Lord, is the blood of the enemies of this design of his: the vengeance that is to be delighted in, is the Vengeance of the Temple: Heaven and all that is in it, is called to rejoyce when *Babylon is destroyed with violence and fury, Rom. 20. 21.* when those who would not have the King of Saints reigne, are brought forth and slain before his face; and in this God makes distinguishing work, and calls to rejoycing; *Isa. 65. 13, 14.* Therefore thus saith the Lord God, My servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold my servants shall rejoyce, but ye shall be ashamed; behold my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye cry for sorrow of heart, and howl for vexation of spirit.

Thus the Saints are called to sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb; *Rev. 15. 3.* The deliverance by Moses was a temporal deliverance from outward yokes and bondage; the deliverance of the Lamb was a spiritual deliverance, from spiritual bondage: the deliverance that God will give his Saints from this oppression, shall be mixed; as their bondage partakes of both, so shall their deliverance be; and therefore they shall sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb. If ever any persons in the world had cause to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, we have this day; the bondage prepared for us, was both in spirituals and temporals; about a Tyrant full of revenge, and a discipline full of persecution, hath been our content; whether the yoke of one and the other, should by the sword and violence be put up in our necks and consciences, is our controversy. There was both *Egypt* and *Babel* in the bondage prepared, and both these enraged; *Pharaoh* doubled the task of the *Israelites* when they did but speak of liberty; what would he have done had he recovered them under his hand after they were escaped? What would the thoughts of that man of blood have been, and his ways, had he prevailed after so many provocations? *Cede ac sanguine quisquis ab exilio.* And what would their ways have been, who thought to sit on his right hand and his left in his kingdom? but of this afterward. Now God having broken both the one snare and the other, surely we have cause to sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb this day, when others are in the condition mentioned *Isa. 8. 21, 22.*

It is true, all things are not clear to all perhaps that serve the Lord; some cannot rejoyce in the works of our God, but they are not the first on whom that sin hath been charged; nothing more frequent in the Scripture, then the laying this sin at the dore of professors, that they set not their hearts to the works of the Lord; if they are of the *Arcties in heaven*, they will at length learn: *Jo. 43. 18.* follow the Lamb; and for the present, musick with some discord, may make melody for *Ps. 48. 42* the Lord. The song of *Deborah* is full of complaints; Division of *Ruben*; *Gilead*, *Dan*, and *43. 44.* *Ashur*, slow in their helps *Meroz* wholly neutral; though we have all these faults, yet may *Jud. 5. 15,* we make a song to the Lord that in Jesus Christ may be acceptable this day. 17. 23.

And the Lord I hope will open the eyes of them amongst us, and give them to cry for mercy when his righteous judgements have driven them from all their holds. When the mighty Army was destroyed in the North about three yeeres ago, many would see nothing in it, but that they had not the blessing of the Church; hence they began to think of it as *Balaak* did of *Balam*, whom he blessed, they were blessed; and whom he cursed they were cursed, God could not bear the robbing him of his glory, and giving it unto selfish men; they shall be blessed and be blessed again, and be no more heard then the *Baalists* cry; even to the Lord shall they cry, but he will not regard them: the Lord I say will drive them from such holds as these, for they may acknowledge his hand. Let then the great work of the Lord be owned, be rejoyced in, for it will certainly bear down all that stand in the way of it: neither is there the least true consolation in any of these alterations, but what arises from a closing with it.

Come we to the second Observation

*Obs. 2.* The workings of God's providence in carrying on the interest of Christ, are and shall be exceeding inglorious, unsuited to the Reasonings and Expectations of the most of men.

He hath a glorious work here to be accomplished, of whom should he now make use? surely the





1. Carnal power and glory seem excellent to the *Jew*; hence think they, when God gives us our *Messiah*, all this must be accomplished; their *Affections* are disordered by corrupt lusts and desires, and that enslaves their *mind* to strange apprehension; God comes in his own way, and how cross do things run to their expectations? What was the corrupt designe of many in *Scotland*, that they might let up a son of *David* in *England*, and themselves be great under him; that they and the r. partakers might impose upon the residue of the Nation, especially in the things of God; their great desire that things should be thus, corrupts their minds to think, that it ought to be so, and it shall be so; Hence, Ambition to rule, and to have all under their power, even in conscience, is quickly mistaken for zeal to the Kingdom of Christ, re-inthroning of Tyranny, is loyalty, and all according to Covenant; as if men had sworn to be good to themselves, and to be true to their own interest all their days; which surely few need to be sworn to. Thus mens minds and judgements are disordered by their lusts and interests, which makes them frame a way for God to proceed in, which when he doth not, how are they surprised!

2. For *Principles*; men take up principles that they will adhere unto; wise principles for good, yea and very righteous too; all things whatever that fall out, must be squared unto their *Principles*; they expect that nothing must be done, but what suits unto them; and if any thing contrary be wrought, even of God himself, how deceived, how disappointed are they?

The most tremendous judgement of God in this world is the hardning of the hearts of men; this seals them up for the most part to destruction. A thing it is often mentioned in the Scripture, and many subtile disputes there are, how it should come forth from him who is most holy, seeing it is the greatest sin of the creature? I shall give you my thoughts in a most eminent instance or two, as to one particular of it.

1. Look on *Pharaoh*, of whom it is most signally spoken, that God hardened his heart: how did the Lord accomplish this? *Pharaoh* settles himself upon as righteous *Principles* as ever any of the sons of men could do; one is, That it belongs to the chief Ruler of a Nation to see to the profit and glory of the Nation. What more righteous principle is there in the world? You that talk of your principles, give me one more righteous than this. Hence he concludes, that if it be incumbent on him to see that the Realm receive no detriment, he must not let the people go by whom they received so many great advantages: God confirms his heart in these principles, which are good in themselves, but abominable when taken up against the mind and providence of God; hence he and his perished in their principles: acting against the appearance of God.

2. It is also said of *Sidon* the King of the *Amorites*, that his heart was hardened, that he would not let the people go through his land: How I pray? Even by adhering to that wise principle, that it is not meet to let a potent enemy into the bowels of a people; and this made way for his ruine.

Thus it is with many; they fix on principles, good in general, and in their reason: old bounds must not be broken up; order must not be disturbed: Let God appear never so eminently, so mightily, they will keep to their Principle; what is this but *judicial hardness*? And this I say is one reason why the actions of God in such a Day as this, are so unsuited to the expectations of men; they square his works to the Interests and Principles, which it will not answer.

3. God chuseth thus to do things above and besides the expectations of men, at his Presence, & the Presence of the Lord Christ may be the more conspicuous in the World. Did the Lord alwaies walk in paths that men had rationally, that is, foolishly (for such is our wisdom in the ways of God) a'or to him, the appearances of his glory would be exceedingly eclipsed. It is hard for men to have a clear and naked view of the power of God in effecting any things, when there is great help of means; so do it; but it is much harder to discern the wisdom of God in an affair, when mens own wisdom and designing is all accomplished. But now, when the way of God is like the way of an Eagle in the Ay; when his paths are in the deep, and his footsteps are not known; then is he glorious in his thing. Men think, if things would be very glorious, if they might be done according to their minds, perhaps indeed they would, but with the glory, not the glory of God.

4. God will do it for the hardning of many false empty Professors, and others in the world, that the judgements appointed may come upon them to the uttermost. The hardning of *Rom.* 9. 18. men to their destruction, being a close and inward work, is one of the most eminent Decrees. 2. 30. act of the providence of God in governing the world; By this, he accomplisheth *Psal.* 81. 12. most of the judgements that he hath threatened. Now there is not any Dispensation of *Exod.* 9. 22.

*Josh. 11. 20.* God towards man, but he can, and doth sometimes cause it to be so managed and ordered, that it shall be a way and means of hardning such as he hath appointed thereunto. Some are hardened by the word, some by mercies, some by Judgements. Among  
*John 12. 40.* other ways that he useth for this purpose, this is one, the disposal of the works of his providence, contrary to the reasonings of men, doing things unlikely and unfitly in  
*Deut. 32. 15.* the eyes of flesh and blood; that so they may despise those ways of his, and be broken in opposition unto them. Take an instance in *Pharaoh's* last hardning for destruction; when he brought the people out of *Egypt*, he did not lead them the direct way into *Canaan*, but carries them into the *Wilderness*, and shuts them up between the mountains and the sea; *Pharaoh* justly concludes that they are entangled beyond escape, and that he shall surely overtake them and destroy them; this draws him out to his ruine: had God led them in the straight path, probably he had not pursued after them; but the Lord lays this as a plot for their destruction. God will harden *Jeroboam*, and therefore a *Lion shall slay the Prophet* that preached against his Idolatry. So was it with the *Jews*; they expect *all glory*, to attend the coming of the *Messiah*, and after the coming of him indeed, God follows them with Judgements to a total desolation; which being so unsuited unto the dispensation they expected, *hardness thereby is come upon them* to the uttermost. *Tertullian* says, she daies say, That the *Scriptures were on purpose framed in many things, to give occasion to proud and curious unbumbled wits to stumble and fall.* And I dare say, that the Lord doth order many of his works in the world, in ways past finding out, on purpose to give occasion to many to stumble and fall. God fulfilleth many mighty works, that could not otherwise be brought about, by hardning the hearts of men. The hardning of the late *King's* heart was an engine whereby he wrought mighty things, and alterations; had not God laid obduracy and stubbornness upon his spirit, we had long since in all probability been ruined. To accomplish this end then, God will so order the works of his providence, that men shall reason themselves into unreasonable & brutish hardness and stupidity. Thus hath God done in the days wherein we live; his mighty acts that he hath wrought, both for the matter of the things done, and the manner of their doing, have been so contrary to mens *Principles, Interests, Expectations, and Reasons*, that they have slighted them to such a degree of hardning, that they seem to have no reason left at all; and when it comes to that, God will fall judiciously upon the very faculties of their souls; he will *blind their eyes*, deprive them of their judgement and insight into things, that they shall be incapable of God's mind as fools; and give them up to *vile affections, to do the things that are not seemly*, as it hath fallen out with too many amongst us. Let us now make some Use of this point. It serves then,

1. To discover the vanity of those men, who because the works of God have not been carried on in ways *sutable to their Reasonings and Expectations*, do utterly reject them, disown them, & oppose him in them. Can these men give any one instance of any one eminent work of God that he hath brought about by such ways and means as men would rationally allow? especially in things that are in immediate subserviency to the Kingdom of the Lord Christ? Can they instance that they have been so managed? nay, hath not this been a means to *harden multitudes to their destruction*, that have limited the *Holy One*, and chalked out paths for him to walk in? I cannot but fear that it was a great provocation of the *Eyes of Gods glory*, that at the beginning, and in the carrying on of the great alterations that have been wrought by his providence among us, we did speak of confirming & continuing under any condition whatsoever, any things or persons which it was in his design to overthrow; We must be promising to keep up the *high tree*, and to keep down the *low tree*, which was not at all in his thoughts, neither ever came it into his heart. I hope he hath taught us, though with thorns, to follow him sometimes, like *Abraham not knowing whither we go*. Now the Lord convince them who are yet under this darkness; that think the waies of God not equal, because not measured by their lines; that bring their crooked rules unto that which is really straight, and cast it away as abominable. The children of *Israel* had got a proverb against the ways of God; it was so taken for granted; that the ways of his providence were not right and straight; that it was grown into a common by-word: a little discovery of the pride and hypocrisy of their own hearts, undeceiv'd them at last.

I shall not say to our Brethren, that they have shewed this day; that if *Abolon* had lived, and all we had been slain, it would have been well pleasing to them; but this I shall say, that it is a sad signe, that our ways please not God, when his ways please not us at all.

There being now space for the handling of the remaining Propositions, I shall goe forth to one generall Use, and so conclude.

Now

Now this I shall take from that of the Prophet *Amos* 4.12. the generality of the people being exercised with various judgements, the residue of them are said to be saved *as a firebrand out of the burning*; that is, powerfully, effectually, from a very terrible, and a very near destruction. After all the Lords great dispensation of providence, in carrying on his own designs, th<sup>t</sup> being the condition of the people of this Nation. many being destroyed by foregoing judgements, and the residue now saved like a firebrand out of the burning, God having given us this issue of his mighty works, in pulling down the high tree, and exalting the low tree, it cannot but be our wisdom to close with the counsel which God gives in such a condition; and that you have, I say, *Amos* 4.12. *Because I will doe this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.* Seeing that all this is done, *Prepare to meet thy God, O England; Prepare to meet thy God, O Parliament; Prepare to meet thy God, O Army*: To lead you a little towards the performance of this duty, it being that, and that alone, which is incumbent on you, I shall shew you these two things.

1. *What it is wherein we are to meet our God*
2. *How must we meet him therein.*

For the first, there are three ways wherein we must meet the Lord, if we desire to answer his mind in any of these dispensations.

1. *In the way of his Providence.*
2. *In the way of his Worship.*
3. *In the way of his Holiness.*

First, The eminent ways or the Providence of God in the<sup>e</sup> days, may be referred unto 3. heads.

1. *His general design to pull down all those high oppositions to the Kingdom of his Son, which I have mentioned.*
2. *His peculiar aim to stain the glory of all flesh, to pull down high trees, that no flesh may glory.*
3. *His shaking of all endearments and enjoyments bear below, that the hearts of his may be fixed only on the things that cannot be shaken.*

And these upon all accounts and considerations whatsoever, appear to be the main tendencies of a<sup>c</sup>tions of Providence in these our days.

Secondly, *There is the way of his Worship*, wherein also he will be met: Its most remote from my thoughts to enter into contests concerning that peculiar way of *Gospel Worship*, which Christ hath appointed. It sufficeth me, that seeing God hath promised, that in these days he will have his *Tabernacle with men*; and that barrenness and drought shall be on every soul that comes up to his feast of *Tabernacles*, it is bottom sufficient to pers<sup>e</sup> men to meet him in that way, according as he shall graciously make our light into them.

2. *There is the way of his Holiness*; as he is *holy*, so are all his ways *holy*, so he will be met and walked with, in all ways of holiness and obedience to Jesus Christ; and these are the ways wherein God will be met by his Remnant, his delivered Remnant,

2. *What when is it to meet the Lord in any of these ways? What is it to meet him in the way of his Providence, his Worship, his Holiness? To meet one in any thing, is to close with him in any thing: We say, here n, I meet you, when we are of one mind. To meet the Lord in these things, is to close with the will and mind of God in them; this is that which I would exhort you unto, yea lay the charge of God upon you this day, even on you and your Companions, who are as a brand snatched out of the burning.*

1. *Meet him in his general design of casting down all combined opposition to the Kingdom of his Son; that God in his appointed time will bring forth the Kingdom of the Lord Christ unto more glory and power, then in former days, I presume you are perswaded: what ever will be more, these six things are clearly promised.*

1. *Fulness of peace unto the Gospel & the professors thereof: Isa. 11.5, 7. & 54.23. Isa. 33.20. Rev. 21.1.*
2. *Purity and beauty of Ordinances, and Gospel Worship, Rev. 11.1. Ch. 21.5. The Tabernacle was wholly made by appointments, Mal. 3.3 4. Zach. 14.16. Rev. 21.27. Zach. 14.23. Isa. 35.8.*
3. *Multitudes of converts, many persons, yea Nations: Isa. 60.7, 8. Ch. 66.8. Ch. 49.18, 20 23 Rev. 7.6.*
4. *The full casting out and rooting of all will worship, and their attendant abomination Rev. 11.2.*
5. *Proffessed subjection of the Nations throughout the whole world unto the Lord Christ: Dan. 2.44. Ch. 7. 126 Isa. 60.6, 7, 8. the Kingdoms become &c. amongst whom his appearance shall be so glorious, that Daved himself shall be said to reign.*

6. *A most glorious and dreadful breaking of all that rise in opposition unto him: Ma. 60.12, never such desolations, Rev. 16.17, 11, 19.*

Now



Now in order to bringing in of this his Rule and Kingdom, with its attendencies, the Lord Christ goes forth in the first place to cast down the things that stand in his way, *dashing his enemies in pieces like a Potter's vessel*: this is a part of the designe of Providence, wherein we are to meet him in these days: and here I shall speak a word, 1. unto them who are enabled to look through the clouds and darknesses, whereby his paths are encompassed. 2. unto them who cannot.

1. Be you perswaded to meet the Lord in this his designe, yea to continue stedfast in helping him against the mighty; I speak not only to you *who are in Authority*, nor unto you to whom the sword is girded; but unto all that with well to *Sion*; We have every one *our mitt* that we may cast into this treasury, we may be all *Princes* in this cause; all *Israels* prevailers with God and men. There be three things whereby even you, who are but as the *number*, the *common souldiers* of Christ, may meet the Lord in this designe.

1. By faith; believe the promises, close with them, ast faith upon them, and you will be *Pf. 110. 1, 4.* lieve the *Beast*, unto destruction, *Antichrist* into the pit, and *Magog* to ruine, believe *Pf. 12. 7, 8.* that the *enemies of Christ* shall be made *his footstool*, that the Nations shall be his *Mic. 5. 3, 4.* inheritance, that he shall reign gloriously in beauty, that he shall *smite in pieces* *Isa. 60. 12.* the head over divers Nations; live in the faith of these things, and as it will give you the sweetnes of them before they come, so it will hasten their coming beyond the endeavors of thousand, yea millions of armed men.

Meet him with your supplications; cry unto him, as *Pf. 45. 3, 4, 5.* Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the Kings enemies, whereby the people shall under thee. This will make you to be the Armies of Heaven, that follow him in his great undertakings. *Rev. 19. 14.* It is his praying people, that are his conquering Armies that follow him: Now you find it coming, leave not pulling with all your strength, least it role back again, *shout not two or three arrows*, and so give over, but never leave shooting, until the enemies of the Lord be all destroyed.

3. Seeing it is his Gospel whose advancement the Lord Jesus aymeth at in all these dispensations, and whose quarrel alone he revegeth, (what ever men may do) he lp on to the advancement of that Gospel of his, which as formerly it was oppressed by the height and tyranny of the tower of Babel, so for the present, is exceedingly debled and cumberd by the rubbish of it, being in some measure cast down.

4. Whereas in the dispensations, it is most eminently and frequently in the praise of Christ said, that he is just and righteous in all his ways, as you may see in all the acclamations of the Saints upon the execution of his judgements on his enemies (*Just and righteous art thou*) which is signally done on this account, because the ways whereby he doth it, are counted most unrighteous in the world; in this then also, is he to be met, even in the administration of justice and judgement, you will otherwise certainly be found in a croffe path unto him, and be borne down before him. This is that wisdom which he calls for among the judges of the earth, when he is set to reign on his holy hills, *Pf. 2. 10, 11.*

2. I shall adde one word or two unto them, who either from the darkness of the things themselves, or from the prejudices and temptations of their own spirits, are not able to discern the righteousness of the ways of God, but rather lift up themselves against him.

1. Then consider the constant appearing of God against every party, that under any colour of pretence whatsoever have lifted up themselves for the reinforcement of things, as in former days, what colour or pretence so ever they have put on, or which way soever they have turned themselves, God hath still appeared against them: can you not discern his leavening their Councils with folly and madness, *weaning* their hearts and hands, making the strong become as towes, and the successful a reproach? though they have gone from mountain to mountain to seek for divination, and changed their preventives almost as often as *Laban* did *Jacobs* wages, yet they find no other fraud nor enchantment that will prevaile; and doth not this proclaim, that the designe which God had in hand, is as yet marvelously above you.

2. Consider the constant answer of Prayers which those which have waited on God in these dispensations (to their unspeakable consolation) have received; finding God to be nigh unto them in all that they call upon him for: if in this thing, they regarded iniquity in their hearts, surely  
God

God would not have leard them: others alſo cry, even to the Lord do they cry, but he will not hear wingers to the abomination of their hearts; ſo that upon theſe and ſuch like conſiderations, you would at laſt take the council of the Psalmiſt. 46. 10. *be ſtill, and know that he is God; be ſilent before him for he is riſen out of his holy habitation, ſay, God hath done great things for theſe, who hath bardned himſelf againſt him and prospered?* And this is the firſt particular.

2. The 2<sup>d</sup> deſigne of providence in theſe diſpenſations, is evidently to *ſtain the glory of all fleſh*, ſo *Iſa. 23. 9.* never did the Lord any works more eminently? what ſort of men is there amongst us whoſe glory God hath not ſtained? I had rather leave this unto ſilent thoughts, then to give you particular inſtances of it: otherwiſe it were very eaſy to make it as clear as the Sun, that God hath left neither ſelf honour nor glory to any of the ſons of men: *meet him then in this alſo.*

1. Cease putting confidence in Man, ſay he is a worm, and the Sun of Man is but a worme, his breath is in his noſtrils, and wherein is he to be accounted of? this uſe doth the Church make of mercies, *Pſ. 20. 5, 7.* ſome truſt in horſes, and ſome in chariots, but we will remember the name of the Lord: we will not truſt in Parliaments or Armies, all fleſh is graſs, (*Iſa. 40.*) let it have its withering time and away; ſee no Wiſdom but the Wiſdom of God, no ſtrength but the ſtrength of God, no glory but his.

2. Have any of us, any glory, any Crowns, any gifts, any graces, any wiſdom or Valour, any uſeful endowments, let us caſt them all down at the feet of Jeſus Chriſt; if we looke on them, if we keep them as our own, God withers all their beauty, all their glory; Thus do the Elders who worſhip the Lamb for ever, *Rom. 4. 10. 11.* ſay to him Lord Jeſus, *thine is the Kingdom and the glory, thine are all the mighty works which have been wrought in our days, thine are all the means whereby they have been accompliſhed; we are nothing, we can do nothing, thou art all, and in all: and this is the ſecond.*

3. He ayms at the ſhaking of all theſe things here below; he is taking down the rate and price of all things here below, on that which was worth 1000<sup>l</sup> he takes his bill and writes down ſcarce the 1000<sup>th</sup> part; he hath laid his hand upon the *noſts of the Nation*, and hath fixed wings unto all their Treasures, and ſo eminently written *vainity and uncertainty* on them all, as muſt needs leſſen their eſteem, were not men blinded by the god of this World; in this alſo are we to meet the Lord.

1. By getting a low eſteem of the things that God is thus ſhaking, and that upon this account, that he ſhakes them for this very end and purpoſe, that we ſhould find neither reſt nor peace in them; perhaps thou haſt had a deſire to be ſomebody in the World, thou ſeeſt thy ſelf come ſhort of what thou aymedſt at; ſay now with *Mophibosheth* upon the return of David, not only haſt, but let alſo, ſeeing that the Lord Jeſus ſhall reign with glory; A man may ſometimes bear a ſervant, for the inſtruction of his Son; God hath ſhaken the enjoyments of his enemies, to lead his friends to diſeſteem them; God forbid, the quite contrary ſhould be found upon any of us.

2. By labouring to find all riches and treasures in the Lord Chriſt; the earth ſtiggers like a drunken man; the Princes of it are reduced to a maſel of bread; all that is ſeen, is of no value; doth not God direct us to the *hidden paters*, to the *treasures* that cannot be deſtroyed? many ſay, *who will ſhow us any good?* Lord liſt thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

2. We are to meet the Lord in the way of his Ordinances, in the way of Goſpel worſhip; the eſtablishing of the Lord Chriſt herein is the iſſue of all the mighty works of God; this is given in as the end of all; *Rev. 12. 3.* *The tabernacles of God, &c.* after great ſhakings, the promiſe ſtill is of a new Heaven and earth, *Iſa. 65. 17. Rev. 21. 1.* and this is that the people of God put themſelves upon in the days wherein Babylon is to be deſtroyed, *Jerem. 50. 4, 5, 6, 8.* that is the work they then take in hand; the end of all is the building of the temple, *Ezek. 47.* and this the conſolation that the people of God do make, *Iſa. 2. 3. 4.* and if this be neglected, the Lord will ſay of us, as David of *Nabab*, ſurely in vaine have I kept theſe men, and all that they have; to meet the Lord in this alſo.

1. Inquire diligently into his mind and will, that you may know his paths, and be acquainted with his ſtatute. I dare ſay, no Temptation in the world, preſſis with more colour and violence upon men and women, then that to a neglect of walking and holding communion with God in his Ordinances, ſuch as the Sacraments, &c. I ſhall not theſe things ſay, but I ſhall ſay, that if we neglect theſe things, we ſhall be ſeparated from God, and ſhall be deſtroyed.

2. *They that do enjoy holy ordinances, labour to have holy hearts answerable thereto; they have heavenly institutions, labour to have heavenly conversations; if we be like the world in our walkings, it is no great matter, if we be like the world in our worship: it is sad walking contrary to God in his own paths; shew out the power and efficacy of all Gospel institutions in a frame of spirit, course of life, and equality of spiritual to aperi all your days.*

3. *Keep up the power of private worship, both personall and family. I have seen many good Laws for the Sabbath, and hope I shall see some good examples; look what the roots are in the Family, such will the fruit be in the Church and Common-wealth; if your spirits are not well ministered there, you will be utterly barren elsewhere; that is done most clearly to God, which is done within doors.*

4. *Meet him in the way of his holiness, in the city of the Sakers unto the Lord for the execution of his judgements and vengeance, they in an especial manner invoke his holiness; Rev. 6. 10. How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And in their rending praises to him, they still make mention of his holiness, and righteousness in all his ways. Though the waies of God are commonly traduced a; unequal and unholly waies; yet in the close there is no property of his that he will more vindicate in all his works, then that of his holiness, in this then we are also to meet the Lord in this day of our deliverance, the day wherein he hath wrought such great and wonderful alterations.*

*This is the holy Ghost maketh upon such like dispensations, 2 Pet. 3. 11. Seeing that all these things, &c. and so also Heb. 12. 27, 28. And this word once more, signifieth the removing of these things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that these things which cannot be shaken, may remain. Therefore we receiving a Kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. All things opposing removed, a freedom established; therefore, let us draw grace. God is the thrice holy one, holy in his nature, holy in his words, and holy in all his works; and he requires that his people be an holy people. To this he still urged his ancient people, from the argument of his presence amongst them; oh that the Spirit of the Lord would bring forth his own fruit of all his dealing with us, that we might be an holy people! If we put Gods pure and clean mercies, into impure and unclean vessels, they will to us be defiled. Let us take heed of prostrating the mighty works of God to the service of our Lusts! Should we now make such conclusion, to our selves, as the rich fool in the Gospel, and say, Well, we have now peace, and prosperity hold up for some years, soul take thy ease, eat, drink; and be merry, grow rich, and great, follow after vanity, praise, folly, uncleanness, enjoy with delight the things which we have, and heap up thereto. Why, as this is to draw the Lord God into a partnership with our abhominations, and to enforce his mighty works, to bear witness to our lust, so certainly it is such a snare, as it will surely and speedily revenge: the end why God delivers us from all our enemies, is, not that we may serve our lusts and our selves without fear, but that we may serve him without fear in right requies and holiness all the days of our lives; let then this be the issue upon the hearts, of all the victories, and successes, and returns of prayers, that we have received; that we give up our selves to the Lord in all manner of holiness; this is that which the Lords voice calls us unto; let not now him that is filthy be filthy still, let not him that is worldly be worldly still; let not him that is loose, and hath cast off the yoke, of Christ, be so still; let not him that ha hath sought himself, do so still; let not him who hath condemned the institutions of Christ, do so still; let not him that has been lifted up above his brethren, be so still; let every one forsake his evil way, and the inquiry that is in his hand, that we who were not a people at all, may be a people to the praise of the God of all; that you who rule over men, may be intrusted in the fear of the Lord; that you may be as the light of the morning when the Son is risen, even as a morning without clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain; that we who are under rule, may sit under our wine and figtrees, speaking well of the Name of God; and labouring to carry on the Kingdom of the Princess Peace even every one as we are called, and abiding there with God; that as when you sought this mercy of God which we rejoyce in, in solemn humbling of your selves before the Lord, I made it appear unto you, that it was the remnant of Jacob, Gods secret and holy ones, lying in the bowells of the Nation, that must be the rise of all our deliverances, so we would now, every one strive to be of that number, for they alone enjoy it, the sweets of this and every mercy.*



